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SECOND DRAFT

Survey of NIE Distribution

1 August 1960

Preface

1. Pursuant to USIB action (USIB-M-34) the Office of National Estimates and the Office of Central Reference, CIA, have been jointly undertaking a survey of the distribution of NIE's and SNIE's. During the last few years there has been noted a steady increase in the number of NIE's published and distributed. It was the purpose of this survey, as indicated in the action cited, to find out where these estimates go and who is reading them.

2. Four years ago the Board of National Estimates prepared an extensive "Survey of NIE Dissemination and Use" (IAC-D-94/1), an important part of which was a series of interviews with a representative sample of final consumers or end-users to ascertain what use they actually made of NIE's. Upon the completion of that survey it was recommended that "each member of the IAC examine its pattern of NIE distribution with the end of continuing to improve the usefulness of NIE's to the policy, planning and executive branches of his agency" and that each IAC agency "undertake to brief new key officers (NIE consumers) within its department on the nature of the NIE and the means at the disposal of these officials."

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for initiating NIE's responsive to specific intelligence problems they may have." Certain limitations on NIE use were also noted for improvement.

3. The present study is considerably more limited in its scope and purpose. It was primarily concerned with investigating the nature of and causes for the apparent large increase in NIE distribution. There were two aspects to this study: (a) a questionnaire enclosed in selected NIE's published over an extended period for the purpose of obtaining certain detailed information regarding the readership of NIE's and the uses made of them and (b) an inquiry directed to the distribution offices of the USIB Agencies* for the purpose of determining how the distribution of NIE's is controlled.

4. Questionnaires were enclosed in seven NIE's of varied subject-matter which were published in the period July 1959 to February 1960. The response to this inquiry was very slow and widely scattered. By means of several reminders by letter and telephone the number of returns increased somewhat. By the time this phase of the inquiry was closed (about 1 June 1960), there had been received 1037 replies from 636 individual respondents.

* Inquiry was made of all of the USIB agencies with the exception of OSO, which receives only 2 copies of each NIE. Most of the data for this report, however, is based on the replies from the major USIB recipients (State, JCS, Army, Navy, Air, and CIA) who receive and distribute 93% of the NIE's sent initially to USIB members and 84% of the total initial distribution to all recipients.

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5. The second phase of the inquiry regarding the control of distribution of NIE's was first conceived as an undertaking to be accomplished by CIA liaison officers visiting, through appropriate channels, the various recipient agencies. After surveying one agency in this way, it was concluded that the method was too time-consuming and unproductive. It was therefore decided to place the responsibility for making the survey upon the shoulders of the chief distribution officer in each of the USIB agencies.* Their complete cooperation was given and full responses to the inquiry were received. Since the non-USIB recipients represented such a very small part of the total distribution and could very largely be identified by title, they were not included in this phase of the survey.

* See footnote, page 2

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1. The Distribution of NIE's.*

There has been a gradual but steady increase in the number of NIE's printed and distributed. During the seven-year period from 1954 to 1960 the basic number of printed copies of each NIE increased from 225 to 450 or 100%.** The number of recipients in the initial distribution list (exclusive of reserve stock) increase from 189 in 1954 to 372 in 1960 or 97%. The reserve stock was increased substantially during this period (from 36 to 78, or 117%) to provide for greater flexibility in meeting supplemental demands.

The rate of increase in NIE's distributed appears to have levelled off at least for the time being. The increase from 1959 to 1960 has been less than 4% compared with 19% from 1958 to 1959 and 12% from 1957 to 1958. It is possible that this low rate for the past year may reflect the added attention given to the control of distributions as a result of this inquiry. The only previously

* For convenience in presentation, the detailed analysis is limited to NIE's of SECRET classification. The same number of TOP SECRET NIE's is printed and the initial distribution is identical with that for SECRET NIE's except that 25 less are distributed within CIA. The distribution of SNIE's is 27 less than for NIE's and only 410 are printed.

** This basic figure is used for purposes of comparison because it is the normal base which provides for the standard initial distribution plus the requisite number of copies for reserve stock. The actual press run in most cases may be increased by 15 to 75 copies to meet the fluctuating demand of DDP within CIA. In very exceptional cases this increase has been considerably greater. The community demand for copies in the 11 series (USSR) has made it necessary to print an additional 100 copies in this series.

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comparable rate was less than 5% in 1956-1957, immediately following the previous survey, following two years in each of which the increase had been 16%. All of the respondents to the present inquiry stated that the numbers of NIE's received was adequate. * One respondent has since reviewed his distribution list and reduced it from 50 to 43 or 14%.

The distribution of a given NIE may vary appreciably from the standard list depending upon the subject and the degree of community interest. However, the standard distribution list, as given below, provides a good measure of the initial distribution pattern of most NIE's.

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One respondent noted that additional copies are required for certain geographic areas and for the 11 series. These are provided from the reserve stock.

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Standard Distribution List for NIE's
(As of 13 July 1960)

White House	4
Secretary of State	1
Secretary of Treasury	1
Secretary of Defense	2
OCDM	3
NSC (Members, Advisors, Observers, NSC Planning Board)	15
OCB	2
ICA	7
Nat. Indications Center	1
Nat. War College	1

CIA	112
State	35
Army	65
Navy	32
Air Force	43
JCS	25
NSA	8
AEC	4
FBI	2
OSO	2
USIB Secretariat	7

Records Center	78
TOTAL	450

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2. Analysis of the Reasons for the Increase in the Number of NIE's Distributed

An important conclusion of the 1956 Survey of NIE distribution was to the effect that "some NIE's do not reach all of the departmental policy or planning heads or other key officials who might find them useful." In some instances it was noted that "the criteria for distribution appeared to be overly restrictive." In the current study, the major USIB recipients were asked to state the reasons for the increase in the number of NIE's being used by their agencies. The replies reflect a growing interest in and use of NIE's by both intelligence users and planners -- and many of these at the higher levels of responsibility. It cannot be determined whether this is a conscious and directed result of agency implementation of the 1956 recommendation to make NIE's and their use more widely understood. It is apparent from the responses, however, that the elements of this increase in numbers includes the following:

(a) A natural expansion of readership as the utility and significance of National Intelligence Estimates have become more firmly established throughout the government.

(b) An increase in the size, responsibility, and complexity of agencies served by NIE's.

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(c) The growing number of senior officials, both military and civilian, who require NIE's in carrying out their responsibilities.

(d) An increasing number of users in the intelligence community itself, including those who themselves work on or contribute to NIE's and those who use NIE's as background for their own intelligence issuances.

(e) The addition of new readers overseas, including Political Advisors (SHAPE, SACLANT, ANCPAC) and Ambassadors, Air Force commanders and Staff planners, and Unified and Specified Commanders.

(f) Various agency reorganizations including changes in physical locations of offices.

(g) The succession of world crises and events (Suez, Lebanon, Berlin, developments in space, etc.), which have generated an increased interest in national intelligence on the part of commanders and planners.

(h) A general increase in the number of people in the government concerned with the communist threat throughout the world, with the developments in modern technological warfare and with the capabilities and intentions of the Soviet Bloc.

(i) The establishment or expansion of reference and library facilities in the several agencies and the enlargement of the Records Center allotment in CIA.

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3. Control of NIE Distribution and Readership

Although NIE's do not carry security controls which are not generally applicable to other documents of the same classification, it was found that all six major USIB recipients do in fact apply special controls of various kinds in the handling of NIE's. The replies reveal that the distribution of NIE's is handled with great care and that access is limited to those persons having a genuine need-to-know. The special controls used include the following:

- (a) Distribution on a "hand-carry" basis direct to users rather than in a routine classified distribution.
- (b) Central storage of all NIE's in a master file.
- (c) Individual examination of each new NIE to determine distribution on a need-to-know basis.
- (d) Maintenance of continuous receipt controls.
- (e) Tickler files in overseas commands in order to comply with one-year restriction.
- (f) Determination of distribution by very senior officials.
- (g) The addition of special markings prohibiting dissemination to contractors.
- (h) Frequent review of distribution lists and policies.

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Although all of these controls are not exercised uniformly by all of the agencies, they are indicative of the special attention given to the security of NIE's. The onward dissemination of NIE's beyond the initial list and the release of NIE's from libraries or other repositories are similarly controlled.

With one exception, all of the agencies queries were of the opinion that the present controls were adequate and that no special controls should be added. The opinion was expressed that such controls might prove a hindrance and might serve to prevent valid recipients from receiving NIE's. It was also indicated that confusion might result because of the differences in the procedures of the military and civilian agencies.

The single dissent from this view was to the effect that special controls which are clearly understood are extremely helpful to the disseminator. He cited the recent USIB decision not to release NIE's to contractors. Specifically, however, he stated that the present controls presented in DCID 11/2 (currently being revised) are not clearly understood or widely used. This reply was apparently not addressed specifically to the question, however, which was concerned with the application of uniform special controls for the handling and distribution of all NIE's as distinct from other documents of the same classification. It is assumed that any special limitations on the distribution of NIE's generally or of specific NIE's individually will continue to be applied when required.

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4. "Policy" Users and "Intelligence" Users

In order to determine in some measure the extent to which the increase in NIE's was due to a greater demand by policy makers or planners ("end-users") as distinguished from members of the intelligence community who themselves were producing intelligence, the major USIB recipients were asked to distinguish between these categories as far as possible. The line between such users is not always clear-cut and may vary from estimate to estimate. However, the rough figures obtained from the six major consumers reveal rather definitely that the increase in intelligence users from 1954 to 1960 was almost $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as great as for policy users served by those agencies. The increase in intelligence users was on the order of 131% and of policy users about 55%.

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